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AUTHOR McKoski, David
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ABSTRACT

The Water in Africa Project was realized over a 2-year period by a team of Peace Corps volunteers, World Wise Schools (WWS) classroom teachers, and WWS staff members. As part of an expanded, detailed design, resources were collected from over 90 volunteers serving in African countries, photos and stories were prepared, and standards-based learning units were created for K-12 students. This unit, "Narrative Cartoons," is intended for use with students in grades 9-12. The unit is designed to draw on the interest of young people in cartoons and to introduce students to techniques of creating alternative styles. Students create a narrative cartoon, or a set of sequentially placed images that tell a story. It may depict one activity or be a collage of various activities. The unit suggests a timeframe, curricular areas, materials needed, standards, discussion questions, objectives, detailed procedures, assessment information, and additional resources. Attached are a narrative cartoon comparison chart, a research sheet, and a narrative cartoon evaluation rubric. (BT)

Water in Africa



Narrative Cartoons



<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/water/africa/lessons/>

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Peace Corps
World Wise Schools
 1111 20th Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20526
 Telephone: (800) 424-8580 x1450
 Fax (202) 692-1421
 E-Mail: wwsinfo@peacecorps.gov

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Water in Africa is a project of Peace Corps World Wise Schools.

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Funded through a grant from the Department of Education, the Water in Africa project was realized over a two year period by a team of Peace Corps Volunteers, World Wise Schools' (WWS) classroom teachers, and WWS staff members. Inspired by an idea of one creative WWS teacher, the project eventually expanded into a detailed design. The development and implementation of the design included the collection of resources from over 90 Volunteers serving in African countries, the preparation of those photos and stories, and the creation of standards-based learning units for K-12 students.

Narrative Cartoons

Description:

Young people are drawn to reading and drawing cartoons. But many young people define and restrict cartoons to the pictorial images of super heroes. This lesson is designed to draw upon the interest which young people find in cartoons, and at the same time introduce students to techniques of creating alternative styles. Based on essays and photos provided by Peace Corps Volunteers, students will create a narrative cartoon, a set of sequentially placed images that tell a story. The narrative cartoon may depict one activity or be a collage of various activities. See samples of the student art work from this lesson created by students from Roberto Clemente Community Academy in Chicago:

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/water/africa/community/studentwork/narrcart.html>

Timeframe: Six to eight 45-minute classes (Length of project depends upon complexity of drawing that students are to achieve)

Curricular Areas: Visual Arts
Language Arts

Grade Level: 9-12 (Can be modified for grades 5-8)

Materials

- 8.5" x 11" heavy weight paper (bristol board works best)
- permanent fine tip marker
- inking pen with fine tip
- waterproof ink
- correction fluid
- eraser (artgum erasers work best)
- pencil
- Narrative Cartoon Comparison Chart
- What's My Story?
- Evaluation Rubric for Narrative Cartoons

Standards

Visual Arts 1- Understands and applies media, technique, and processes related to the visual arts.

Benchmark -- Applies media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that one's intentions are carried out in artworks.

Visual Arts 5: Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others.

Benchmark-- Identifies intentions of those creating artworks.

Language Arts 4: Gathers and uses information for research purposes.

Benchmark-- Synthesizes a variety of types of visual information, including pictures and symbols, for research topics.

Language Arts 5: Demonstrates competence in the general skills, and strategies for reading a variety of informational texts.

Benchmark-- Scans a passage to determine whether it contains relevant information.

Essential Questions

How does art convey meaning?

How are messages communicated through artistic styles?

Objectives

Students will:

- Collect relevant information from the Water in Africa Web site and create a series of images that tell a story.
- Use inking techniques to enhance the visual aspects of images.
- Use drawing styles to enhance the message of the story.

Procedure

Before beginning this unit

A day or two before introducing the lesson have students bring in their favorite cartoon.

Procedure Day One

1. Before viewing examples of cartoons that the students brought to class, have the students brainstorm the characteristics of a cartoon. Record responses on a class chart.

During the brainstorming session ask these questions:

- What must a cartoon include to be considered a cartoon?
- Who are the characters in cartoons?
- Are the cartoons in color or black and white?
- What is the message of cartoons?
- Is the focus on the words or the drawing in a cartoon?
- How is a cartoon drawn? Realistically or abstractly?

- How is a cartoon organized? Are the pictures arranged in order or randomly placed?
 - Are there many details in the drawings?
2. Collect the cartoons the students brought in for their homework assignment. Post several of them in the classroom, and make overhead copies of one or two to use as examples. Working with the whole class, view the cartoons and compare them to the list of characteristics that were created during the brainstorming session. Discuss the following with students:
- How are these cartoons similar or different to the characteristics listed?
 - Are there additional characteristics which should be added or deleted?

Because most students are only familiar with the traditional super hero cartoons and cartoons found in local newspapers it is important at this point to begin making the transition to looking at alternative examples of narrative cartoons. Non-super hero examples may be found in alternative newspapers (often free), health center publications, or textbooks.

3. Put students into groups of four. Give each group a super hero cartoon and an alternative style narrative cartoon. A variety of alternative style narrative cartoons should be provided. Using the Narrative Cartoon Comparison Chart have each group compare and contrast the cartoons and complete the group chart. Information may be recorded with words or illustrations.
4. Have each group records their responses on a class chart.
5. As a class, discuss similarities and differences between the two types of cartoons.
6. At this point students should have an understanding of the variety of technical styles and subject matter that may be found in cartoons. Examples may include the following:
- Cartoons can depict common daily activities and include common people.
 - Images may be used to communicate the message or to enhance the written text.
 - Images can be realistic or abstract. Images are as important to the cartoon as the text.
7. Review and discuss the essential questions with students before moving to next step. How do works of art convey meaning? How are messages communicated through artistic style?

Procedure Day Two/Three

1. Instruct students to collect information for their narrative cartoon from the photos and anecdotes provided in the Water in Africa Web site.
<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/water/africa/>

2. Have the students use the What's My Story chart (PDF or RTF) to record information that they find interesting. They may write or draw their ideas as they search for information. The purpose of this exercise is to help students collect and organize a variety of information from which they will later choose the cartoon topic. At this point, students should not be concerned about the details of their cartoon, but only collecting information that they find interesting and feel may be enjoyable to work with.

Procedure Day Four

1. Hold a class discussion that reviews the information the students collected. Ask students the following questions: What information interests you the most? What information would be the most exciting to illustrate? If you were to get up in front of the class and tell a story from beginning to end, what information would you use?
2. Instruct the students to select information that will be used for one story idea and begin drawing a rough sketch or a rough draft of their narrative cartoon. At this point students may need to return to the Water in Africa Web site to collect or refine collected information. <http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/water/africa/>
3. Students must address the following points while creating their rough sketch. Determine how the narrative cartoon will be told. Determine placement of words in relation to pictures. Determine if wording is necessary. If so, determine the type of wording (dialogue, thoughts, narration, commentary) Panels are the individual cells or boxes that contain each image of the sequence. Determine how many panels will be needed and the size of panels.

REMINDER: The narrative cartoon may contain a series of pictures highlighting a specific topic or the cartoon could compare and contrast several topics.

Procedure Day Five

1. Monitor students as they begin drawing the final copy of their narrative cartoon using the rough sketch as a guide.
2. Instruct the students to first draw the outside borders of each panel including a title panel. Panels may all be the same size or they may vary in size, however the number of panels drawn should fill the entire 8.5"x11" paper.
3. After the panels have been drawn have students begin drawing their narrative cartoons inside each panel.

Procedure Day Six Until Complete

1. The last step in completing the narrative cartoon is to ink the pencil drawing. Tell students they should consider the following points when inking:

- The ink and dip pen is used for inking only the lines.
- A fine tip marker is used to write the text.
- After lines are inked use ink and dip pen for adding patterns and shadows to give more depth and texture to each panel.
- Consider the entire page as a composition.
- Use white-out to make corrections

Assessment

1. Have students complete peer evaluation by writing about the content of a classmate's narrative cartoon. To do this, have the students exchange cartoons. Then each student reads the narrative cartoon and completes the questions on the Narrative Comparison Chart that was used at the beginning of the lesson.
2. Using the information collected from the handout, have the students write responses to the essential questions. Students may share responses as a class or in small groups.
3. Use the Evaluation Rubric for Narrative Cartoons (PDF or RTF) to evaluate individual student's work.

Additional Resources

Capacchione, Lucia. "The Creative Journal for Children." Boston: Shambhala, 1989.
 McCloud, Scott. "Understanding Comics." New York: Kitchen Sink Press, 1994.
 Spiegelman, Art. "Maus: A Survivor's Tale." New York: Random House, 1986. (This book is based on his father's personal experience as a concentration survivor and is an excellent example of a narrative cartoon.) Work of cartoon artist Robert Crumb Japanese comics

About the Author

David McKoski teaches Art and Chinese at Roberto Clemente Community Academy in Chicago. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines from 1985-87 and is a Peace Corps Fellows graduate from DePaul University's UrbanTeacher Corps.

Narrative Cartoon Comparison Chart

Name _____

	Sample 1	Sample 2
Who are the characters?		
What is the message?		
Is the message funny?		
What drawing techniques are used?		
Are the drawings realistic, abstract, or roughly drawn?		
What is the range of values used?		
How does the value effect the image?		
How is the comic arranged?		
Who is the artist?		

What's My Story?

Name _____

Directions: You must complete some research in order to write a narrative cartoon. As you read the materials that have been provided, record any information that you think would make an interesting story.

Country _____

Culture

Source of Water

Daily Usage

Conservation

Environment

Health and Nutrition

Recreation

Transportation

Narrative Cartoon Evaluation Rubric

Student Name: _____

Area	Points	Descriptors
Content Accuracy	/100	The Student: • Chose content that was relevant to his/her objective and presented the content accurately. • Referred to at least four resources to support the information in the narrative cartoon.
Content Depth	/100	The Student: • Expressed content through non-literal representation. • Expressed content through text.
Process	/100	The Student: • Used information from essays and photos to create a narrative story. • Used a variety of inking techniques.
Presentation and Neatness	/100	The Student: • Planned the layout of the narrative cartoon. • Executed the inking techniques neatly.
Creativity	/100	The Student: • Used information and techniques to create an original narrative cartoon.
Total	/100	

Comments: